

ERA mourns the loss of retired CEO Ray Hall

The Electronics Representatives Association (ERA) has announced that its retired executive vice president and CEO, Raymond J. Hall, passed away on Nov. 13 in Findlay, Ohio. He was 80 and had recently undergone surgery to set a broken femur suffered in a fall.

Mr. Hall was ERA's longest-serving management executive and a member of the association's Hall of Fame. His tenure at the helm of the 84-year-old organization began in 1969 and extended to 2004 when he started transitioning into retirement.

He was a native of Somerville, Mass., a Marine Corps veteran and alumnus of the University of Illinois. In his early working years, he owned and operated the Raymond J. Hall Company of Chicago, a management services provider for many trade associations, including ERA and manufacturers' representative associations in other industries. He became heavily involved in the operations of ERA in the early 1960s and eventually turned his full attention to ERA in 1969. He also served as administrator of the ERA Insurance Trust (later called RepCare) for more than 40 years.

As ERA CEO, Mr. Hall started working on and promoting the concept of a manufacturers' representative council of rep associations in the early 1970s. Through his efforts, the Alliance of Manufacturers' Representatives Associations (AMRA) and the Manufacturers Representatives Educational Research Foundation (MRERF) were eventually established, and MRERF developed the rep certification (Certified Manufacturers' Professional Representative or CPMR) program that Mr. Hall had long envisioned.

For ERA, Mr. Hall developed and/or oversaw dozens of milestone projects, including:

- ERA's publication of many electronics industry standards, guidelines and white papers;
- the 1987 launching of the Chapter Officers Leadership Training (COLT) program, which has trained hundreds of volunteers from 20+ local chapters;
- the primary planning of ERA's national management and marketing conferences from the 1960s through the early 2000s and the opening of the conferences to manufacturer attendees;
- the conversion of ERA's flagship publication, *The Representor*, from a newsletter to a four-color magazine;
- the addition of manufacturers to ERA membership; and
- the creation of ERA's first website.

Throughout his career, Mr. Hall served as an officer and board member of many organizations, including the American Society of Association Executives, the Association Forum, the Small Business Legislative Council, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100 and the Center for Exhibition Industry Research. He served on the advisory boards of ITT Sheraton, Sonesta Hotels, Associated Luxury Hotels International, Buena Vista Hotels, Walt Disney World, Disneyland, American Airlines and Meeting News. He was a founding member of Meeting Planners International and a member of its Hall of Fame. The additional awards he received over the years are too many to list.

In 2004, ERA saluted Mr. Hall upon his pending retirement by creating the Ray Hall Spirit of ERA Award. This award honors recipients for their individual contributions to promoting, protecting and improving the outsourced professional field sales (rep) function.

Mr. Hall is survived by his wife of 32 years, Patricia, his daughters, Kathy Green and Tracey Stewart, his son, Christopher Kosch, his brother, Robert, and eight grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son, Raymond J. Hall, Jr.

A Memorial Service is planned on March 23, 2019, at 3:00 p.m. at St. James Cathedral, 65 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. ERA members will receive further details.

